

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/801

8 January 1991

T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- ◆ Secretary-General deplores expulsion of Palestinians from occupied territories, and calls on Israel to permit those deported to return home.
- ◆ Amendment Conference to partial test-ban Treaty begins general debate; speakers call for its conversion into comprehensive nuclear-test ban.
- ◆ Secretary-General appoints Giorgio Giacomelli of Italy to head United Nations International Drug Control Programme.
- ◆ Secretary-General appoints Ilter Turkmen as Commissioner-General of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.
- ◆ President of General Assembly concludes visit to Palestine refugees in occupied territories and Jordan.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today through his Spokesman that he was deeply concerned by the fact that Israel had carried out its decision to expel four Palestinians from the occupied territories. The Secretary-General strongly deplored this action which was in direct contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and called on the Israeli authorities to permit those who had been deported to return to their homes.

He said it should be recalled that this matter was addressed in Security Council resolution 681 (1990) on 20 December, by which the Council urged the Secretary-General to make new efforts to monitor the situation in the occupied territories.

The Secretary-General has previously expressed concern in a similar statement on 17 December, following the deportation of four Palestinians from the occupied territories. In that statement, he called on the Israeli authorities to respect the 1949 Geneva Convention (on the protection of civilians in time of war).

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In a related development, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in a press release made available at Headquarters today, appealed for Israel to respect civilians in Israel and the occupied territories. It said the expulsions today by Israel brought to 66 the total number of persons expelled from the occupied territories since the beginning of the intifadah, and that the expulsions were taking place "in a climate of violence" fomented by the growing number of civilian victims since September 1990.

The Red Cross asked that everything possible be done to put an end to the spiral of violence and repression, and that the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip be treated in accordance with the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention.

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The Amendment Conference of the State Parties to the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water -- also called the partial test-ban Treaty -- began its general debate today, with speakers calling for the Treaty's conversion into a comprehensive nuclear-test ban.

The Treaty, which does not cover underground tests, was signed on 5 August 1963 by the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, and entered into force on 10 October the same year. By 1 November 1990, there were 117 parties to the Treaty. Two nuclear-weapon States -- China and France -- are among those that have not acceded to it.

Citing the relationship between nuclear testing and the arms race, many speakers said a comprehensive ban was essential to ending the nuclear threat posed by the existence of nearly 50,000 weapons. They said such a ban would help ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as a first step towards their total elimination. Also, citing the end of the cold war and improved international relations, some said the time was ripe for the establishment of such a treaty.

Other speakers, however, said a comprehensive ban could not be viewed in isolation from the overall question of disarmament and arms control. They said the Conference on Disarmament was the appropriate international forum for negotiating a test ban. One speaker noted that a comprehensive test ban involved complex national security issues for countries that have long relied on nuclear deterrence for protection.

Yesterday, Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, who was elected President of the Conference, said the time was far overdue for renewed and determined action to realize the goal of "ending all nuclear tests, by all States, in all environments and for all time".

Also yesterday, in a message read by a representative of the Soviet Union, President Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed his country's willingness to stop

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nuclear tests at any time if the United States did the same. He also expressed Soviet readiness to amend the partial test-ban Treaty to a comprehensive ban, including underground tests.

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The Secretary-General has decided to appoint Giorgio Giacomelli of Italy to head the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. He will be succeeded as Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) by Ilter Turkmen of Turkey.

In resolution 45/179, the General Assembly welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General to unify the United Nations structures for drug abuse control to enable the United Nations to strengthen its role as a main focus for concerted international actions on this matter. Accordingly, the functions of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control will be integrated in the single new Programme.

Mr. Giacomelli will execute the integration process of the new Programme, which will have exclusive responsibility for co-ordinating and providing effective leadership for all United Nations drug-control activities.

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In a similar announcement, the Secretary-General, after having consulted with the members of the Advisory Commission for UNRWA, announced the appointment of Ilter Turkmen, a national of Turkey, as Commissioner-General of UNRWA.

Mr. Turkmen has been the Ambassador of Turkey to France since 1988. He was Turkey's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1985 to 1988 as well as from 1975 to 1978, and was Permanent Representative of his country to the United Nations Office at Geneva from 1983 to 1985.

From 1980 to 1983, Mr. Turkmen was Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, was its Secretary-General in 1980 and was its High Counsellor from 1978 to 1979.

From 1979 to 1980, he was the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Thailand to liaise with the Thai Government on humanitarian questions. He has also been the Turkey's Ambassador to the Soviet Union and to Greece.

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The President of the General Assembly, Guido de Marco (Malta), yesterday ended a six-day visit to Israel and the occupied territories during which he toured refugee camps of the West Bank, Gaza and Jordan.

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At press conference in Amman, the President described the high state of tension in the occupied territories as "a powder keg" and urged implementation of United Nations resolutions calling for an international peace conference on the Middle East as a means to defuse it. He also called on United Nations Member countries to increase their financial support UNRWA, which provides education, health and social services to the refugees under increasingly difficult conditions.

Following a round-table discussion at the Royal Palace on the economic and humanitarian aspects of the crisis in the Gulf, chaired by Crown Prince Hassan, the President met for over an hour with Palestinian officials. They sounded themes raised in similar meetings with Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories -- namely, the need for international protection against excesses by the Israeli authorities. They also expressed concern over the wave of Soviet Jewish migration to Israel and frustration over the failure to implement United Nations resolutions on the questions of Palestine and the Middle East.

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